



## Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project

*Hetch Hetchy Water and Power (HHW&P), a division of the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), manages a complex utilities system which provides drinking water to Groveland, the City of San Francisco, and several Bay Area counties, as well as hydroelectric power for San Francisco municipal uses, for sale to irrigation districts, and for sale to other utilities. HHW&P utilizes communication equipment at O'Shaughnessy Dam, in the Hetch Hetchy area of Yosemite National Park, in support of their operation.*

### What is the proposed project and why is it important?

The current equipment, utilizing existing phone lines, transmits voice and data communications essential to the operation and security of HHW&P's electric and water supply utilities, and is also used by Yosemite personnel for park communications. The existing radio and fiber optic equipment are obsolete and no longer supported by their manufacturers; the proposed project would update this infrastructure by replacing or updating components of the communication system throughout Tuolumne County, including potentially adding one new site within Yosemite National Park.

A system upgrade would thus improve radio communication vital to park operational activities, such as law enforcement, search and rescue, and fire management, improving the capability to ensure dam security, visitor and staff safety, and protection of park resources. Visitor experiences could also be enhanced, as those groups visiting the Hetch Hetchy area would be better served under a more reliable radio communications network (i.e., in case of emergency, etc.).

Working with the park, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, and SFPUC, HHW&P is working through a formal planning process, the *Hetch Hetchy Microwave Replacement Project*, to upgrade this system.

### What are the next steps?

The National Park Service is working collaboratively with the USDA Forest Service, the City and County of San Francisco, and the public in the preparation of an Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) following necessary guidelines.

This larger document will contain the full spectrum of the *Hetch Hetchy Microwave Replacement Project*, and within it a specific component will be included that focuses specifically on the potential site located in Yosemite National Park.

Public scoping for this project ended on March 10, 2006. Currently, comments are being analyzed and the environmental document is being developed.

#### Planning Timeline:

Fall 2005:

Early 2006 (occurred February 24- April 10):

Spring 2007:

Summer/Fall 2007:

Internal Agency Scoping

Formal Public Scoping

Public Review of Draft IS/EA

Completion of Final Decision Documents

## Where will the project site be located?

The collective input of HHW&P, Yosemite National Park, and the public will help to determine the most appropriate location for this project within the Hetch Hetchy region.

After initial data collection and analysis, preliminary sites were discussed and presented to the park and public that met necessary criteria. The overall goal is to find a site that allows for the greatest communication range and has easy accessibility through existing roads and trails.

The site chosen for this project needs to:

- Be located outside of Yosemite National Park Wilderness Area
- Have line- of- sight visibility to O'Shaughnessy Dam and communication tower on Burnout Ridge
- Have limited visibility from locations viewed by the public
- Be relatively close to an exiting electrical distribution line to avoid the need for further infrastructure
- Be close to an existing road and turnout to allow for easy maintenance access
- Be large enough for a communications tower and equipment shelter

Design options for the proposed tower and associated communications shelter will also rely on park and public input.

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## Public Participation

Here are some ways to learn more and stay involved:

- Attend a National Park Service's public open house to talk with project specialists and obtain more information about ongoing and future park projects.
- Add your name to the park's mailing list (to address/fax/email below) and receive planning-related notices. You can also submit your email address to receive Yosemite National Park's periodic electronic newsletter.
- Although the public scoping comment period has closed for this project, to continue to stay involved in all park planning efforts please contact us through any of the following:

Mail: Superintendent  
Attn: ***Planning Mailing List***  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax: 209/379- 1294

Email: YOSE\_Planning@nps.gov

- Visit online: [www.nps.gov/yose/planning](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning).